

REMARKS

The above amendment with the following remarks is submitted to be fully responsive to the Official Action of December 8, 2003. Reconsideration of this application in light of the amendment and the allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-26 were pending in the present application prior to the above amendment. In response to the Office Action, claims 1, 3, 6, 17, 19, 21 and 26 have been amended and claims 2, 20 and 22 have been canceled. Therefore, claims 1, 3-19, 21, 23-26 are still pending in the present application and are believed to be in proper condition for allowance.

Referring now to the Office Action, the Examiner initially objected to claims 6 as being in improper form, and further objected to claims 7, 9-18 as being multi-dependent claims dependent on multi-dependent claims, which as explained in discussion with the Applicant's representative, stems from their dependency on improper claim 6. In response, claim 6 has been amended to be in proper alternative form. The Examiner's objection relative to claims 7, 9-18 is thus, believed to be rendered moot. Therefore, the withdrawal of this objection is requested.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as being indefinite because of the usage of the word "same". In response, this term has been amended to specifically recite "the user's digital voice signal". Consequently, the withdrawal of this rejection is also respectfully requested.

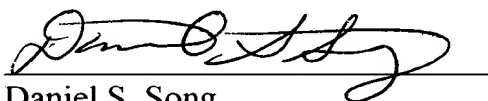
The Applicants also acknowledge with appreciation, the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2, 3, 8, 22-26 if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response thereto, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of dependent claim 2. Claim 3 has been amended to be in independent form to include all of the limitations of claim 1. In addition,

independent claim 19 has been amended to include all the limitations of claim 22 and the intervening claim 20. The dependencies of dependent claims 6, 8, 17, 21 and 26 have been amended to better correspond to the now amended claims. Therefore, since all of the claims include subject matter indicated by the Examiner as being allowable, the allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

The Examiner's rejection of claims 1, 4, 5, 19-21 as being anticipated by McBride is believed to be rendered moot in view of the above amendments, and the withdrawal of this rejection is also respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested. However, if the Examiner deems that any issue remains after considering this response, he is invited to call the undersigned to expedite the prosecution and work out any such issue by telephone.

Respectfully submitted,



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